

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 SINGAP 00746 180417Z

ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 SP-02 IO-14 CA-01 SY-05

VO-03 DEAE-00 /070 W

-----086853 180428Z /70

R 170630Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9658

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 0746

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN SHUD READ 0746 VICE 0745)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, SN, VM

SUBJECT: PRESS STORY ON RESCUE OF BOAT REFUGEES BY U.S. VESSEL

REF: SINGAPORE 0732

1. REFTTEL REPORTS ARRIVAL IN SINGAPORE OF 55 VIETNAM REFUGEES PICKED UP AT SEA BY U.S. FLAG VESSEL GATEWAY CITY. REFUGEES WERE PERMITTED TO LAND IN SINGAPORE AFTER USG PROVIDED ASSURANCE TO SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT THAT THOSE NOT ACCEPTED FOR RESETTLEMENT BY OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY U.S. FOLLOWING STORY, DESCRIBING REFUGEES' EXPERIENCE AT SEA, APPEARED IN FEBRUARY 17 ISSUE OF STRAITS TIMES.

2. QUOTE. FIFTY-FIVE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, ON A FOUNDERING CRAFT AMIDST BLUSTERING SEAS OFF SOUTH VIETNAM, WERE RESCUED BY A CONTAINER VESSEL AND BROUGHT TO SINGAPORE ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT. THE REFUGEES -- 31 MEN, 11 WOMEN INCLUDING ONE PREGNANT AND 13 CHILDREN -- WERE HANDED OVER TO THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) AUTHORITIES AT SEMBAWANG PORT YESTERDAY. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY WILL BE KEPT HERE FOR A LIMITED PERIOD BEFORE BEING OFFERED RESIDENCE IN OTHER COUNTRIES. THE REFUGEES HAD SET OUT IN THEIR 12.2 METRE LONG
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 SINGAP 00746 180417Z

FISHING BOAT, THE VUNG TAU, IN A FREEDOM DASH TWO WEEKS EARLIER FROM SOUTH VIETNAM. BEFORE LONG, THEIR FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES RAN OUT AND THEY WERE WITHOUT NOURISHMENT FOR TWO DAYS DRIFTING IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA ABOUT 370 KM OFF THE SOUTHEASTERN COAST OF VIETNAM. ON TUESDAY AT ABOUT 4 P.M., THE GATEWAY CITY, THE WORLD'S FIRST-EVER CONTAINER VESSEL, ON ITS ROUTINE RUN FROM HONG KONG TO SINGAPORE SPOTTED THE

FISHING BOAT AND ITS BELEAGURED REFUGEES. A CREW MEMBER FROM THE 9,000 GROSS TON SHIP, MR. WILLIAM MARLEY, 21, A MESSMAN, SAID THAT THE REFUGEES FOR HELP AND WAVED A WHITE RAG. HE SAID THAT THE MASTER OF THE VESSEL, CAPTAIN GARY FLEEGER, PULLED ALONGSIDE THE BOAT AND STARTED RESCUE OPERATIONS. MR. MARLEY SAID: "THE REFUGEES SAID THAT THEY HAD BEEN WITHOUT FOOD AND WATER FOR TWO DAYS AS HALF THEIR SUPPLIES HAD FALLEN INTO THE SEAS DURING THE ESCAPE FROM VIETNAM. THEY SAID THAT THREE JAPANESE VESSELS HAD IGNORED THEIR DISTRESS CRIES, BUT A SINGAPORE VESSEL WAS KIND ENOUGH TO PROVIDE FOOD SUPPLIES. HE ADDED THAT THE REFUGEES, FROM THREE UPPER MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES, HAD ORGANIZED THEIR PERILOUS ESCAPE TO FREEDOM AFTER MONTHS OF PLANNING." AFTER THE GATEWAY CITY, OWNED BY SEALAND SERVICE, HAD BERTHED AT SEMBAWANG PORT YESTERDAY MORNING, UNHCR OFFICIALS TOOK THE REFUGEES IN TWO BUSES TO A LOCAL HOSTEL HERE. EARLIER, SEALAND TERMINAL STAFF AT SEMBAWANG PORT SHOWERED THE REFUGEES WITH DIAPERS AND OTHER CLOTHING FOR THE BABIES AND FOODSTUFFS WORTH MORE THAN \$300. UNQUOTE.
HOLDRIDGE

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, PRESS COMMENTS, RESCUE OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SINGAP00746
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780075-0293
Format: TEL
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780240/aaaabhxx.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5fe5a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SINGAPORE 732
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3558904
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS STORY ON RESCUE OF BOAT REFUGEES BY U.S. VESSEL
TAGS: SREF, SN, VM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5fe5a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014